

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 198715

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:TGEN, ENRG, NL

SUBJECT: PROPOSED US-DUTCH-SWISS SALE OF NUCLEAR
REACTORS TO SOUTH AFRICA

1. NETHERLANDS CHARGE VAN AERSSSEN CALLED ON COUNSELOR
SONNENFELDT AUGUST 20 ON INSTRUCTIONS TO DISCUSS NUCLEAR
REACTOR SALE. VAN AERSSSEN STATED HIS GOVERNMENT'S VIEW
THAT, AS SOUTH AFRICA HAS NOT ADHERED TO THE NPT, ALL
SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE BROUGHT UNDER
IAEA SAFEGUARDS. DUTCH COMPANY INVOLVED IS PRESSING GON
FOR APPROVAL OF ITS PARTICIPATION IN CONSORTIUM, AND ISSUE
IS BEING ADDRESSED IN AUGUST 22 CABINET MEETING. VAN
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AERSSSEN ASKED WHETHER USG HAD ANY INDICATION THAT SOUTH

AFRICA IS CONSIDERING ADHERENCE TO THE NPT.

2. THE COUNSELOR EXPLAINED THAT WE HAVE HAD SOME SIGNALS BUT NO FIRM INDICATIONS THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS CONSIDERING NPT ADHERENCE. AS GENERAL ELECTRIC HAS NOT YET APPLIED FOR LICENSING OR FINANCING, USG HAS NOT YET FORMALLY ADDRESSED QUESTION OF APPROVAL OF THIS SALE. OUR POLICY WOULD BE TO REQUIRE FULL SAFEGUARDS FOFEGUARDS FOR REACTOR PART OF DEAL. WE UNDERSTAND THAT TWO OTHER CONSORTIA--GERMAN AND FRENCH--ARE BIDDING FOR SOUTH AFR AN CONTRACT. SHOULD THE US-DUTCH-SWISS CONSORTIUM IMPOSE

CONDITION OF NPT ADHERENCE ON SOUTH AFRICANS, THEY MIGHT WELL TURN TO OTHER CONSORTIA, WHATEVER THEIR EVOLVING ATTITUDE MIGHT HAVE BEEN. NEITHER OF THE OTHER CONSORTIA, WHICH WOULD THEN GET CONTRACT, WOULD BE AS LIKELY TO IMPOSE SAFEGUARDS AS STRICT AS WE WOULD IMPOSE ON SOUTH AFRICANS. IN THE END, SUPPORTERS OF NON-PROLIFERATION MIGHT WELL END UP AS LOSERS BY INSISTING ON SOUTH AFRICAN ADHERENCE TO NPT.

3. SONNENFELDT CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT USG WOULD CONSIDER ISSUE FURTHER, INCLUDING DUTCH VIEW ON IMPORTANCE OF ALL SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES BEING UNDER IAEA SAFEGUARDS. MAW

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